

United States Department of Agriculture
E X T E N S I O N S E R V I C E
Washington, D. C.

DIGEST OF HOMEMAKERS' CHATS

Week of June 1, 1942

Monday - Be a Victory Planner in Your Home. Home economists from various divisions of the Government have prepared a leaflet, "Be a Victory Planner in Your Home" giving six simple ways in which you can do your part in Victory planning. You can get this leaflet free by writing to the U. S. Department of Agriculture at Washington, D. C. In the meantime you can begin to do your part by starting like this: (1) Spend Less and Save More. (2) Make Things and Have More. (3) Cut Waste and Make Things Last. (4) Buy Carefully and Stretch Pennies. (5) Budget Your Hours and Make Each Count. (6) Safeguard Your Family and Help Guard Your Country.

Tuesday - Question Box. We start off with the question "Is it safe to wash a painted wall with soap and water?" That all depends on the kind of paint on the wall. If it is an oil or varnish paint with a glossy finish, it is safe provided you do the job correctly. But if the paint is calcimine or whitewash, it will wash off. Brushing is the only way to clean this. Another question on cleaning walls is "Why do directions for washing walls say to start at the bottom and wash up?" Walls should be washed from the bottom up because when water runs down on a soiled wall it leaves streaks that are difficult to remove. But when it runs down a moistened clean wall it does not leave difficult stains. In answer to a third question, we give you a method of mending a crack in a stone laundry tub. You can make a tub of slate, soapstone, or cement watertight by filling the crack with a paste of litharge and glycerin. For a small crack you need only a cupful of litharge and a small amount of the cheapest glycerin. Stir together to form a smooth heavy paste. Be sure the crack is clean before mixing the paste, because the litharge hardens fast when mixed with glycerin. A bulletin giving other helpful hints along this line is available. Write to the U. S. Department of Agriculture for No. 1460, "Simple Plumbing Repairs in the Home." And now for the last question today. "What makes white rice turn a greyish green color when it is boiled?" Food scientists say minerals in the water probably cause this and a pinch of cream of tartar in the cooking water will prevent the discoloration.

Wednesday - Onion Specials. From June 8 to 15, grocery stores and vegetable retail markets will offer new-crop onions as Victory Food Specials, in a drive to move the extra heavy supplies of this vegetable. The spring crop of onions is about double last year's, and nearly 50 percent larger than the average-size crop. This onion

special is another drive in the Agricultural Marketing Program to conserve the Nation's food and prevent waste. It gives broader markets to the producers of perishable farm products and gives the consumers the advantage in supply and price which comes from a heavily stocked market. Marketing specialists say, in order to get the best "buy," look for bright, clean, firm onions with dry stems. Keep them in a dry, cool, dark place.

Thursday - Question Box. Today's first inquiry is about drying cherries. Good varieties for drying are Tartarian, Bing, Lambert, Dikeman, sour, and pie cherries. Select fruit when it is just ripe, wash and remove the stems and any imperfect fruit. To hasten drying, dip the cherries for 30 to 40 seconds in solution of boiling lye made by dissolving 5 ounces of concentrated commercial lye in 2 gallons of water. Heat to boiling. After dipping, wash the fruit thoroughly. Spread cherries on trays in single layers and place the trays in a drier. Start drying at 120 degrees and never let the temperature go over 150 degrees. Dry until cherries are rigid and brittle. They will keep for a year or more if sealed in moistureproof containers.

The second question is from a mother who wants to know if free foods given during the school year for lunches could be continued for a vacation lunch plan. Under some circumstances this is possible. The mothers should form a committee before school is over, find sponsors for the vacation lunch program who will supplement the free foods, and supervise serving the lunches. They might also get the school health officer to certify the children who particularly need the foods and call on the local Agricultural Marketing Administration representative for further information.

The third question is in regard to ticks, now that picnics are in order. Mothers should keep a constant watch during May and June for ticks on the children. A tick bite may not be serious, but in some cases it may be a point of infection for Rocky Mountain spotted fever or rabbit fever. Ticks also carry several other diseases. If a tick doesn't stay attached more than 6 hours there is little danger of infection. If one is found on a person, remove and destroy it at once and apply iodine to the bite.

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DIGEST OF HOMEMAKERS' CHATS
Week of June 8, 1942

Monday - Take Advantage of Onion Plenty. Onions are plentiful. Use them all through the meal except, of course, for dessert. Their value is chiefly in the flavor, although they are not entirely without food value. Boil and serve them with butter or white sauce, or try stuffing large Bermudas. To do this, skin the onions, cut in half crosswise, simmer in salted water until almost tender. Drain and remove center onion rings. Cook a little chopped celery or parsley in fat, add stale bread crumbs, salt, pepper, and chopped onion centers. Stuff outside onion rings with this and bake in moderate oven for 30 minutes. To make a heartier dish, use chopped meat, fish, or baked beans in place of the bread crumbs. Another dish is onion soup. Chop onions fine and brown in fat. Then simmer the onion pieces in water for about 20 minutes and add meat broth. Thicken to suit taste; season with salt and pepper. Cook for a few minutes longer. Serve piping hot. Put a slice of toasted bread in each bowl and sprinkle on a little cheese. A good-looking salad is made by laying slices of orange and onions on a lettuce leaf. Serve with your favorite dressing.

Tuesday - Question Box. The first question today is being asked by many women. "Is there a way to test jar rings to tell if they can be used again?" In general, rubber jar rings are still in condition to use if the rubber contains plenty of elasticity. If it will stretch and snap back into place, it is probably safe. Also look for the print of the jar on the ring. If this shows, then the rubber is not likely to be safe to use. The second question is "How much sugar can I get for canning this season?" Under a new sugar-rationing regulation, home canners may now get 1 pound of sugar for every 4 quarts of finished canned fruit. They can get an additional 1 pound a year for each person in the family, for making jellies and preserves. Now for a question about canning vegetables whole or as juice. A housewife asks which method is more economical. The answer is: Vegetables canned whole instead of pressed for juice give more food value for the space in the container. However, if you have plenty of bottles and not so many jars or cans, you may be wise to fill those bottles with tomato or fruit juices of various sorts. And this question from a farm housewife who has no refrigerator. She puts food in cold spring water to keep, but has read that vegetables lose their vitamins when soaked in water. She asks if it is wrong to put lettuce and other green vegetables in the water when they are brought in from the garden on a hot day. Food scientists say: No. If you leave the vegetables in cold water only a few minutes to crisp them, you probably save food value rather than lose it because vegetables lose vitamins when they wilt. But vitamins B and C are soluble in water and if vegetables are chopped and left in it for several hours, they lose these vitamins. And the last question - "Is it true that cucumbers contain

an indigestible juice that comes out if you soak them in salt water or vinegar water?" Scientists say cucumbers contain no harmful juice and the soaking only makes them limp and causes loss of food value.

Wednesday - Wood in the Home. More wood is going into furniture now that less metal furniture is being manufactured. From now on, more articles for the house will be made of wood. Walnut wood may be substituted for bronze in desk lamps. Drawer pulls, curtain poles, brackets and rings, doorknobs and latches, coat hangers with wooden hooks, window sashes, tool boxes and bedspring frames are being made from wood. To prevent swelling or warping in hot moist weather, wood should be finished to seal the pores. Handles of tooth brushes, hair brushes, and general household utensils are likely to be made of wood or wood plastic. There are toy soldiers, doll furniture, construction sets and similar gadgets, all made of wood. Wood cellulose is going into shoelace tabs. Technicians say that new materials derived from wood will be even stronger and better than wood in its original form.

Thursday - Question Box. The first question today is "How can one recognize poison ivy?" Plant scientists answer with the old rhyme: "Leaflets three, let it be." Poison ivy has three rather shiny dark green leaflets in each cluster. These turn a lovely red in the fall. It also has cream-colored berries resembling mistletoe that appear later in the season on older plants. Poison sumac and poison oak have the same effect on the skin as poison ivy. To get further facts on these poison plants write to the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., for copy of Farmers' Bulletin 1166 called Poison Ivy and Poison Sumac. The next question is "How can I take care of my electric ironer to make it last longer?" Don't damage the surface of the ironer shoe nor jar the wires of the heating element. Turn metal objects that would scratch the shoe toward the padding when ironing. Clean the shoe with a damp cloth, dry, and polish with soft cloth. Rub with beeswax occasionally when the shoe is warm. Keep the padded roll cover clean. Follow manufacturers' directions for oiling. Keep the ironer covered when not in use. The next question - "What is the stocking situation this summer?" As stocks of silk hose are used up, they will be replaced by other kinds. Cotton stockings are becoming more popular. However, only a limited amount of sheer cotton hose will be available because of Army and Navy requirements for high-count cotton yarns. Nylon is needed for military use also. Rayon is the principal substitute for silk now at the disposal of hosiery manufacturers.

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DIGEST OF HOMEMAkers' CHATS
Week of June 15, 1942

Monday - Summer Care of the Heating System. Cleaning and caring for the stove or furnace now will pay dividends in better service next winter. Some general things to be done to any heating plant are to open the cleanout doors into the heating compartments and remove all soot; remove all ashes from the firebox and ashpit. Take down the smoke pipe and knock out all soot. Reach in the chimney hole with a cup and bale out the soot at the base of the chimney flue. Scrape rust off the iron parts of the furnace and apply polish. Be sure to get the black around the hinges and frames of the doors. Remove the furnace pipe, clean, stuff the inside with paper. Store in a dry place. Leave all the furnace doors open. In the warm-air furnace, examine the sheet-metal jacket for leaky joints, loose heating ducts, or other defects, and have them repaired. Clean the registers in the rooms. Don't drain hot-water systems of old water, and refill with fresh water because the fresh water contains air, and active agent of rust. In a steam-heating system, drain completely and flush the boiler to remove all rust. Refill the whole system. Excess water can be drawn off in the fall. If any new parts are needed for any kind of heating system, order them at once. They may not be available in the fall.

Tuesday - Question Box. The first question today is from a woman who wants to know how to avoid long cooking of the less tender cuts of meat in order to save gas. Home economists say one way is to grind these cuts, as this breaks up the tough fibers and allows them to cook like tender cuts. Make freshly ground meat into patties or meat cakes, like hamburgers, lamb or veal patties; or if using pork, into sausage cakes. Leftover cooked meat can also be ground and used in brown or moist hash or in croquettes, or heated in white sauce or gravy and served on toast or used in a noodle or rice ring. Chop suey is another low-cost meat dish that doesn't require long cooking, because the meat is shredded. Liver, kidneys, sweetbreads, and brains cook in a short time on top of the stove.

A second question is on caring for bath sponges. There are two good rules of care for all sponges. Wash them in warm soap and water after every use and rinse well. Squeeze, don't twist them. Dry natural sponges in the shade. Store rubber sponges away from heat, light, and metals.

The third question is from a city housewife who has heard someone say the old-fashioned sadiron is likely to come back to the home and she wants to know just what a "sadiron" is. The sadiorn or flatiron is the kind that was used before electric irons were invented. They are used on top of the kitchen stove, and are still used where there is no electric current. One kind has a handle made in one with the body of the iron and another type has a detachable wooden handle. In working, you need one iron on the stove, heating while the other is in use on the board. For very hot work, a third iron is needed.

The last question is this: Is it necessary to dry-clean garments and blankets before packing them for the summer? It is desirable but not absolutely necessary, if you can launder the wool article. Grease and food spots should be removed from clothing, and woollens should be brushed and sunned to get rid of moth eggs or larvae. Pack in boxes that can be sealed or in strong paper wrappings that can be sealed. For added safety, put some moth balls or flakes in the parcel.

Wednesday - Foods in Plentiful Supply. Summer is with us, and with it come fresh foods from the farm. Products from gardens nearby are usually cheaper and of better quality, and when they appear, it is a signal for homemakers to prepare to put up some of these foods for future use. Peaches, watermelons, cantaloups, tomatoes, and corn on the cob are summer's treats that are out-and-out luxuries at any other time of the year. Sweet corn comes about the fourth of July. On the market now are peas, beans, cabbage, and all kinds of greens. And June is the first of the cherry months. Grapes will come in sometime in July. Poultry is plentiful this year because of the increased production of eggs. In hatching chicks for pullets, the farmers naturally get a lot of young cockerels, too. These are ideal for eating. Take advantage of these foods as they appear.

Thursday - Question Box. The first question today is on meat. A woman asks: "Please explain the purple marks stamped on meat at the market. And is that purple coloring harmless?" The coloring used is absolutely harmless and as for the marks, there are two kinds. Meat sold from one State to another is inspected for wholesomeness by a Federal inspector and is stamped "U. S. Inspected and Passed." The other stamp shows quality, grade, and use and is found on beef, veal, and lamb. This stamp is not obligatory for dealers but they can request this service of the Agricultural Marketing Administration of the U. S. Dept. of Agriculture. The grades are "U. S. Prime," "U. S. Choice," "U. S. Good," "U. S. Commercial," and "U. S. Utility" in descending order and prices should correspond.

The second question is on getting rid of black ants. Entomologists say the secret of getting rid of ants is to locate the nest and destroy the queen and the young ants; then the workers will die. Follow the trail back to where they disappear, and inject a little carbon disulphide, kerosene, or gasoline into the opening. If you can't find the colony, try poisoned sirup as a bait or sprinkle sodium fluoride powder along edges of the kitchen floor. To keep ants off a table, stand the table legs in small saucers containing kerosene. For other ways of getting rid of ants, write to the U. S. Dept. of Agriculture and ask for Leaflet 147 on House Ants.

The last question is how to remove berry stains from table linen and cotton dresses. Act promptly. If the article is white or fast-colored, stretch the stained part over a wide bowl and tie it on. Pour boiling water on the stain from a teakettle held 3 or 4 feet above the bowl. If there is fruit pulp in the stain, rub the spot between your hands after using the teakettle, then try the boiling water again. Bleach by hanging wet in the sun. If the stain is very persistent, try rubbing it with lemon juice and then place the article in the sun. Do not use soap on fresh fruit and berry stains.

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DIGEST OF HOMEMAKERS' CHATS
Week of June 22, 1942

Monday - Desserts That Save Sugar. Cookery scientists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture offer the following tips for making the most of your sugar. First, serve desserts hot whenever possible, because hot food tastes sweeter than cold. Second, add a tiny bit of salt to bring out flavor and sweetness. Third, save every bit of juice from canned fruit and use it to sweeten and flavor fruit drinks, or in puddings and gelatin desserts. Fourth, be sure all sugar is completely dissolved. Now for some family desserts that call for little sugar. Old-fashioned shortcake made with biscuit dough is popular at this season. With it use lightly sweetened fruit - fresh, dried, or canned. Use cream or not as you like. Fruit cobbler is also economical with sugar. Bread-crumble puddings are also sugar-saving desserts. Dried fruits have so much natural sugar that they need little sweetening. Also, sweet fresh fruits can do their bit. In making fruit cup, save sugar by combining a sweet fruit with a tart fruit. Custard desserts, cornstarch pudding, and cottage pudding may all be made without any sugar. They can be made with honey or sirup. You can get a free copy of Recipes To Match Your Sugar Ration from the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

Tuesday - Question Box. The first question today is how to clean paint from brushes. That depends on the kind of paint being used. If you have been painting with oil paint, clean the bristles with raw linseed oil; for flat-finish paint, clean with kerosene. If you have been using varnish, clean the brush with turpentine. For shellac, the best cleaner is denatured alcohol. Plain water will take off calcimine or whitewash. When you finish painting, use a rag to get as much paint off the brush as you can. Then tip the brush in the liquid solvent. Clean again with a clean cloth. Last, wash the brush in soap and water, rinse, and dry. Hang up by the handle to keep bristles straight, and cover with paper to keep out dust. The next question is, "What causes flat places on rubber rollers of the wringer on the waling machine?" The flat spots come from leaving the rolls pressed together. The pressure should be released the moment all the clothes have gone through the wringer. The wringer should be cleaned and dried after every wash, then covered to protect from dust and heat. The last question today is from a woman who wants to know how often to clean her rug in order to get the most wear from it. Equipment experts advise cleaning the rug before gritty dirt gets down into the pile and cuts the fibers. They say a short cleaning two or three times a week is better than once-a-week cleaning.

Wednesday - Brush and Broom Care. After a cleaning job, always clean your brooms, brushes, dustpans, cloths, and mops so that they are ready for the next job; time is saved on the next cleaning day, and also, the utensils last longer. Most brooms and brushes can be cleaned with soap and water. Dry them promptly and see that the bristles are straight. Brooms made of broomcorn should be wiped with a dry cloth, as water is not good for them.

Scrub brushes with wooden backs should be dried in the sun with the bristles down to keep water from running into the wood. Keep most other brushes out of the hot sun. In winter, don't let the brushes freeze. Keep wall brushes, especially, clean to prevent smearing the walls.

Thursday - Question Box. The first question today is from a housewife who has the problem of storing extra milk, now that milk deliveries are being made every other day. The milk can be poured into low, broad glass jars, provided the jars and lids are scalded thoroughly each time they are used. Take out the second shelf below the freezing unit and use the kind of refrigerator dishes that fit one above the other to store other foods in the high space left beside the milk bottles. If the refrigerator has divided shelves, half of the shelf can be removed to give extra storage space for the bottles. Another suggestion is to plan quantities more closely in preparing meals, so that left-overs will use less space. Many people in cities buy the second day's supply of milk at the grocery store or buy milk in the rectangular paper containers that take up less space and can be laid on their sides. The next question is brought up by the need of saving tires and gasoline. A housewife says, "Our community has worked out a plan to have all the usual meetings on the same day so the whole family can come in at one time and save driving the car on different days. We have a community hall where families can gather between meetings and have basket meals, but there is no refrigerator or stove for cooking. Can you suggest some menus for these lunches and suppers?" Well, now is a good time to use sandwiches, and the Secretary of Agriculture has suggested that we use more breads and especially that we try the enriched flours or whole-wheat flours. We have lots of wheat this year but not enough storage space. If members of the family eat lunches at different hours, individual lunches should be packed. Also plan for the second meal away from home if you are staying late, so as to put into sandwiches the foods that keep best. Ham, corned beef, cooked bacon, and other smoked meat fillings keep well, also American or Swiss style cheese, peanut butter, fruit butter spreads, or preserves. For the first meal you can have meat sandwiches of cold cuts of roast meat, meat loaf, cooked sausage, hard-cooked eggs, **mashed cooked seasoned navy beans or soybeans**, or a salad filling such as lettuce and tomato. Vary the sandwiches with different seasonings - catsup, mustard, salad dressing, minced onion, horseradish, or pickle. To make these meals a little different, you can have individual meat pies or turn-overs, or frankfurters in rolls. To balance the day's meals, use raw crisp vegetables, such as carrot, turnip, or cucumber sticks, raw cabbage, whole or quartered tomatoes, celery, spring onions, radishes, and slivers of green pepper. Have fruits that can be eaten from the hand, or dried fruits, if others are not in season. Fruit turn-overs made with canned fruit are easy to handle.

United States Department of Agriculture
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Washington, D. C.

DIGEST OF HOMEMAKERS' CHATS
Week of June 29, 1942

Monday - Tomatoes--Victory Food Special. Victory Food Special is the name of the Department of Agriculture has given to those fruits, vegetables, or other farm products during the period when they are in seasonally excessive supply. This week's special is an all-American food. The tomato was first discovered growing in Mexico and was taken to Europe, then brought back to America where it was thought to be poison and was used only for decorative purposes. It is one of our most valuable sources of vitamin C, and also contains vitamin A and B1 and iron. There are well over 4 million bushels of tomatoes on the market this year - 15 percent over the average crop of tomato-producing areas. This year you may find green ones in the stores. Ordinarily, these would have been allowed to ripen in the freight cars before reaching the stores. But wartime requirements make it necessary to keep the cars rolling. Do your part by selecting a nice green lot of tomatoes from the grocer and ripening them in sunshine yourself.

Tuesday - Question Box. The first inquiry is "What is the difference between vegetable soybeans and any other kind of soybeans?" Plant scientists say the vegetable soybeans have a number of advantages as a green vegetable, as baked dry beans, or for canning. They have better flavor and can be cooked in a shorter time. They are high in food value. Here is a question on peaches. "Which kinds of peaches have the most vitamin A - yellow-fleshed or white-fleshed?" Scientists of the Department say the yellow-fleshed varieties are better for supplying vitamin A. Eat them fresh to get the most vitamins from them. The next is a wartime question. "What is the origin of the slogan 'an acre for a soldier?'" Is it general, all over the United States?" This slogan started in the South, because borrowers from the Farm Security Administration heard that each soldier in the Army needs for his outfit, among other things, the cotton from one-half to 1 acre of land, the hide of 1 steer, and the wool of 20 sheep. Some of the folks planting "Soldier acres" dedicate them to particular soldiers. One used a sign which read: "I hereby dedicate one acre of my cropland to be planted in peanuts to James Wall, my soldier in the service of the United States. I pledge myself to treat this acre as his acre, to tend it with more than ordinary care, to make it produce to its fullest capacity, Food for Freedom."

Wednesday - Homemade Bread and Rolls. Our country has an abundance of wheat; the problem is where to store it. The Secretary of Agriculture has suggested that homemakers help the situation by doing more home baking or using more bakers' products. He suggests trying the new enriched flours or the whole-wheat flours. They are nourishing and tasty. Ingredients for ordinary bread are flour, liquid, salt, yeast, a little sugar and a little fat. Use your own preferred recipe or write to the U. S. Department of Agriculture for a copy of the Farmers' Bulletin 1775, Homemade Bread, Cake, and Pastry.

Thursday - Question Box. The first question today is from a woman who wants to know if there is much loss of vitamin B1 in cooking. Home economists of the Department say that depends on the kind of food, the way you prepare it, the temperature used in cooking, and the length of time the food is cooked. When vegetables are cooked by the usual kitchen methods, about 20 percent of vitamin B1 is destroyed. The cooking water for vegetables should always be used - serve with the vegetable, or use it in sauces, gravy, or soups, because a lot of the vitamin content passes into this water. As for meats, the loss of B1 in cooking is roughly about 40 percent. The next question is "What is the best way to get clinkers of the walls of the firebox in my cook-stove? I burn hard coal." Household equipment specialists of the Department explain that ash from coal melts at high temperatures and forms the clinker which fuses and sticks to the firebox lining. When you have a clear red fire, draw the hot red coals away from the firebox lining. Drop in about a quart of oyster shells or a pint of lime, close to the door. Close the door and keep the fire hot. The lime will make it easy to tap off the clinker with a poker when the fire is out. Another question brings up the matter of conserving dusters and dust mops. Wash all dust-cloths frequently in hot soapy water. Rinse and dry them thoroughly before putting them away. Wash oiled dusters often and re-oil them. To oil a dust cloth, put a few drops of lemon oil or paraffin oil on it and put it in a closed can for 24 hours. Always store oiled cloths in closed metal or glass containers to guard against fire. Care for a dry mop just the same as a dust cloth. Use a vacuum cleaner on it or shake the mop out of doors, then wash. Dry out of doors if possible. Another homemaker wants to know how to make "cheese dreams." First slice bread thin, remove crusts and without buttering make into sandwiches with thin even slices of American cheddar cheese for the filling. Season with salt and a drop or two of tobasco sauce. Melt enough butter in a skillet to cover the bottom and brown sandwiches slowly on both sides. Add more butter if necessary, but be careful not to let it get too hot and brown the sandwiches before the bread is heated through and the cheese melted. These "cheese dreams" go well with luncheon or supper salads.